

Hills Resource Recovery Centre Liaison Committee

Minutes of a meeting held at the White Horse, Compton Bassett on Wednesday 23rd November 2005.

PRESENT

Wiltshire County Council

Councillor Nancy Bryant (chaired the meeting)

North Wiltshire District Council

Councillor David Evans

Compton Bassett Parish Council

Councillor Peter Szczesiak

Councillor Dave Coward

Councillor Peter Barnett

Councillor John Reis

Calne Town Council

Councillor Colin Viner

Councillor Roy Golding

Calne Without Parish Council

Councillor Barry Miller

Cherhill Parish Council

Councillor Dave Grafton

Councillor Barry Seed

Mrs Barbara Raven (parish clerk)

Hilmarton Parish Council

Councillor John Henly

Councillor Phil Kibble

Councillor Jeff Files

Heddington Parish Council

Councillor Geoff Dickerson

Councillor Sally Wilkinson

Spreckley Road Association

Mr Ian Marsh

Hills Group

Peter Andrew, waste disposal manager

Andrew Liddle, aggregates production manager

Steve Burns, recycling contracts manager

Barrie Hedges, communications adviser

INTRODUCTION

Peter Andrew welcomed everyone and said that Hills was keen to re-establish liaison meetings on a more regular basis. His suggestion that Councillor Bryant should be asked to chair the meeting was agreed

WILTSHIRE WASTE STRATEGY

Barrie Hedges summarised a Wiltshire County Council announcement, made earlier in the day, regarding its future waste strategy. The council has indicated that it intends to award two major contracts to Hills:

1 For the building and operation at Westbury of a Mechanical and Biological Treatment (MBT) plant. The plant will (from 2008) process domestic waste from West Wiltshire which currently goes to landfill at Lower Compton. The new plant will handle 60,000 tonnes pa and will produce a solid recovered fuel for the Westbury cement works. Only 10 per cent of the original will then need to be landfilled at Lower Compton. The plans are subject to planning permission, an Environment Agency licence and EA permission for fuel trials at the cement works.

2 Transportation from 2008 of 50,000 tonnes pa of household waste from the Salisbury district to a new energy from waste (EfW) plant near Slough in Berkshire. Salisbury's waste also currently travels to Lower Compton.

LANDFILL & QUARRYING UPDATE

Peter Andrew explained that the Lower Compton operation was a key element in Wiltshire's long-term strategy, providing not just landfill but extensive recycling and composting facilities. While landfilling of domestic waste will be reduced as a result of the new contract, the need for that element of its service remains. It will still receive waste from other parts of Wiltshire, the residue from the Westbury plant and local commercial waste. There is also a need to maintain continuity of supply of the high quality silica sand which Lower Compton produces and which is the last resource of its type in the county. The sand is essential to the manufacture of thermal blocks across the region and they in turn contribute greatly to energy conservation in new homes.

The company was, therefore, developing a planning application to extend the existing quarry / landfill on its northern boundary. He provided an outline of the initial proposals and supplied each councilor present with an explanatory plan. The extension would, he said, provide an additional six years of sand at current output and 10 years of landfill at the planned input rate. It is envisaged that the landfill and quarrying operations will come to an end in around 2023.

Councillor Reis was concerned that assurances had been given previously of no further extensions to the site. Mr Andrew said he was not in post previously and not aware of any such assurances. Councillor Reis also asked whether Hills was involved in or aware of current attempts to buy land to the north around Freeth Farm for sand extraction. It was established that those activities do not involve Hills.

Action: Councils were invited to provide Hills with preliminary comments on the proposals outlined at the meeting. Hills will provide a more detailed brief at the next meeting in January, followed by a public exhibition (see below).

MATERIALS RECYCLING FACILITY UPDATE

Steve Burns provided an update on the facility, which he said was fundamental to the success of the recycling drive across Wiltshire. Hills is now operating a fleet of 18 kerbside collection vehicles. While it still operates sorting lines, the fact that the kerbside vehicles deliver pre-sorted materials means that its main role is to bulk up recyclables for delivery to re-processors.

In answer to questions, he said the size of the black boxes has been determined by what it was judged an average family would produce and an individual could safely carry. Anyone producing more can ask for a second box. Collecting plastic is not currently viable because vehicles would quickly be filled with air rather than the weight on which the waste contract is based. Hills is, however, looking at introducing plastics containers to its local "bring" sites. The bins would then be emptied into compaction vehicles.

HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE UPDATE

Steve Burns said that the Honeyball Calne site at Lower Compton is part of a network which has now grown to 10 HRCs receiving a total of 70,000 tonnes pa which would otherwise go to landfill. Honeyball is one of the smaller sites but nonetheless receives the equivalent of 4,000 tpa, of which 74 per cent is currently being recycled. There are plans for further HRCs at Salisbury and Marlborough.

COMPOSTING UPDATE

Peter Andrew reported that the Lower Compton compost operation is now handling the equivalent of 27,000 tonnes pa of green waste. Its *Warrior* compost is proving popular with individuals and with landscapers. The compost is accredited to national standards by the Soil Association for use on organic farms.

He said that odour from the operation has created nuisance for some neighbouring properties and the company has now installed an automated odour control system. Some further directional adjustment is, however, required and is best made in liaison with neighbours. Councillors Reis and Miller mentioned odour problems over recent weeks

Action: Hills will provide a mobile number which will allow residents suffering nuisance to report it quickly to the site so that the system can be adjusted. Number to be circulated shortly.

OTHER ISSUES

N AAFI building

Steve Burns said that Hills is talking to the Ministry of Defence about a possible longer term parking arrangement involving direct access from its own site. Local representatives said that such an arrangement would be beneficial because it would avoid conflict with school buses outside the site. There was some frustration with the MoD over the community's inability to make progress over the possible use of the NAAFI building. There was similarly concern over a small wooded area (owned by MoD) which is subject to fly-tipping and trespass by children and teenagers. Hills had already made efforts to tidy up this area.

Gymnasium

Peter Andrew said that the company has created a new skip storage area. The resulting relocation of skips from the surrounds of the gymnasium will make it possible to landscape the area.

Litter

Peter Andrew said that the company has further improved its control of wind-blown litter. In particular, it has erected 2.2-metre high litter fences, bought a state-of-the-art compactor and instituted litter picking in and around the site.

Lorry routes

Representatives from Compton Bassett were concerned that some HGVs on their way to the Hills site from the north (leaving the A3102) are ignoring the weight limit and coming through the village. The lorries concerned appear to be those of external companies delivering goods rather than waste to the site.

Action: Hills to investigate.

Mud on the road

There was some concern regarding mud on the road between the A4 and the site.

Action: Hills to arrange road sweeping as necessary.

Light pollution

There was concern about light pollution from a particular part of the site.

Action: It has since been established that the light referred to comes from the Tarmac Topmix plant which will be closing in the New Year.

Site name

Compton Bassett representatives pointed out that the habitual use of the village name as the address for the site is misleading and attracts unnecessary traffic.

Action: Hills to investigate alternatives which could include changing the postal address for the site (so assisting the problem with drivers coming through Compton Bassett).

FUTURE LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS

It was agreed that each council and the Spreckley Road Residents Association should agree their long term representation on the liaison group. They should also identify any non-councillors whom they believe should be invited.

Action: Councils to advise as above.

NEXT MEETING

The next liaison group meeting will be held at Compton Bassett village hall on Thursday 12 January at 7.30pm. This will be followed on Friday 21 and Saturday 22 January by a public exhibition of the extended quarrying / landfill proposals at Compton Bassett village hall. There was enthusiasm for site tours in tandem with the planning exhibition.

Action: Hills to advise councils of the detailed plans for the public exhibition and site tours, which will be advertised in the local media. Councils to publicise within their own areas (parish magazines?).